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Review by
Brig. Gen. Lansdale

1 February 1962

POPULAR SUPPORT
OAS MEETING, JANUARY 1962
(2nd Report)

This is a second report of the score-sheet I have been keeping on popular demonstrations in the Western Hemisphere for and against the U.S. position on Cuba at the OAS Meeting of Foreign Ministers (MFM), Punta del Este. The information given below is a compilation of all new reports received since my review of 25 January (under this same heading) and does not repeat previous reports.

The Hemisphere press has been most active in reporting the OAS meeting, and has been largely favorable to the U.S. position. However, a press analysis has not been included in this score-sheet of actions. The score-sheet is an indication of the clash of people on the street, between Communist forces and the forces of Freedom in the Western Hemisphere. The issue, for and against the Communist regime in Cuba, was plainly enough at stake in the OAS meeting to make this show of strength on the streets of the Hemisphere significant.

PRO-COMMUNIST

PRO-FREEDOM

Argentina

(population 20,956,000)

18 Jan. The Communist Party of Argentina instructed its members to prepare leaflets, put up posters, and prepare effigies of Uncle Sam to be burned on 18 January at a mass meeting to be followed by a demonstration in front of the U.S. Embassy. These activities were broken up by the Argentine police.

19 Jan. Demonstrations by approximately 100 students in Buenos Aires.

26 Jan. Argentine Navy Chief urged U.S. to stand firm on its position at MFM.

31 Jan. Argentine military reported dissatisfied with MFM outcome and would seek break of relations and ousting of Foreign Minister...

Bolivia

(population 3,462,000)

23 Jan. La Paz demonstration attended by 4,000 including youth armed with Czech machine pistols. One killed, 30 wounded. Demonstration reported in Cochabamba. Two U.S. flags burned.

23 Jan. In La Paz, Catholics attempted to storm Communist Headquarters; police intervened. Newspaper and radio station attacked. Demonstration reported in Cochabamba.

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24 Jan. La Paz demonstration attended by 4,000. Reports of larger and more violent demonstration being planned.

Brazil

(population 68,000,000)

19 Jan. Small meeting in Recife Theater. Rally in Santos (500).

Chile

(population 7,627,000)

15 Jan. About 35 pro-Castroites, carrying a banner, made a sudden, brief attack on the USIA office in Santiago, breaking a window and spattering red ink on outside walls. The group dispersed before any arrests could be made.

25 Jan. Pro-Castro elements in Santiago continued a program of defacing or pasting over anti-Castro posters.

Colombia

(population 14,132,000)

21 Jan. 40 Persons murdered North Valle, 24 murdered near Caicedonia, and 11 murdered near La Victoria. Survivors report perpetrators all armed and wearing fatigue and police uniforms. Wounds indicate use of Madsen sub-machine guns, carbines and .38 calibre pistols. Government communique implies action of leftist extremists and released texts of two letters allegedly written by Colombians to Castro and

PRO-FREEDOM

24 Jan. "Spectacular" interference with Communist demonstrators.

19 Jan. Meeting in Recife disrupted when unidentified individual threw bottle of acid. Rally in Santos disrupted by two smoke bombs emplaced by anti-Communists.

25 Jan. Anti-Communist labor groups called for free elections in Cuba under OAS supervision.

22 Jan. An attempt to stage an anti-Castro parade on 22 Jan. was unsuccessful due to reluctance or indifference of local groups and the fact that many group members are on vacation.

25 Jan. 21,000 posters on the Cuban question were posted throughout Santiago.

18 Jan. Cuban exiles bid farewell to Colombian representative to MFM at airport.

22 Jan. Three minor demonstrations and one street fight during week.

26 Jan. Two-hundred Anti-Communist hecklers harrassed Communist demonstration in Bogota.

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Partially Declassified/Released on 7-5-89
(F88-758) under provisions of E.O. 12356
by N. Menan, National Security Council

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23 Jan. Minor demonstrations in Bogota, Cali, and Medellin.

26 Jan. Demonstration Bogota attended by 600. U.S. flag burned.

Costa Rica
(population 1,171,000)

22 Jan. Demonstration - police used tear gas to break up march on President's home. 200 involved. Communist paper called for demonstration and work stoppage in banana zone. Civil guard headquarters attacked by Communists (300) in an unsuccessful attempt to free 2 Communists from prison.

Government has prohibited public demonstrations until after the 4 Feb. election.

Dominican Republic
(population 3,014,000)

None reported.

None reported.

Ecuador
(population 4,298,000)

25 Jan. U.S. Country Team reports probably overthrow of President Arosemena by extreme right or extreme left in near future.

El Salvador
(population 2,612,000)

22 Jan. Rally attended by an estimated 2,000 people was closely monitored by plain-clothes police who were detailed to control the demonstrators.

None reported.

27 Jan. Pro-Castro meeting (1,000) - (reported 50% were government agents) - was terminated by people being drawn off to observe Thunderbird Air Show or to attend Cathedral Ceremony.

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Guatemala

(population 3,759,000)

29 Jan. A few bombs exploded with no casualties.

25 Jan. Most stringent state of seige in Guatemalan history declared.

29 Jan. Government expelled some oppositionists.

Haiti

(population 3,505,000)

24 Jan. Government sent letters to schools indicating support of Mexico rather than U. S. position at MFM - same read over radio and demonstrations being organized by government for 24 or 25 Jan for same objective. Other reports indicate Haitian opposition to US by police concentration on surveillance of US personnel and activities, and not on Communist methods or activities.

None reported.

NOTE: Haiti ultimately voted with U. S.

26 Jan. Inflammatory anti-US speeches probably engendered by President Duvalier's speech on 2 Jan.

Honduras

(population 1,950,000)

24 Jan. Students and construction workers failed in an attempt to organize demonstration.

None reported.

Mexico

(population 34,626,000)

22 Jan. Communist demonstration. Because of government counteraction, only about 400 participated.

28 Jan. Meeting of 35 leader-members of pro-Cuban group to criticize Mexican representative's remarks at MFM.

24 Jan. A Church-sponsored demonstration and pilgrimage in homage to the Virgin of Guadalupe culminated in Mexico, D. F., when approximately 40,000 rural residents, mostly from Toluca, who had participated in a three-day pilgrimage, united at the Basilica of Guadalupe in order to pray for world peace and divine guidance for the Meeting of Foreign Ministers. The participants carried anti-Communist placards. Mexican newspapers gave front-page coverage to the pilgrimage.

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Panama

(population 1,053,000)

22 Jan. Small crowd of 50-200 persons attended meeting at Santa Ana Plaza to hear speeches by pro-Castro agitators.

25 Jan. Several hundred persons demonstrated demanding firm action against Cuba. Reportedly not impressive in terms of numbers but well publicized locally.

Peru

(population 10,857,000)

23 Jan. The GOP denied a scheduled pro-Castro student meeting a permit to meet. When the students attempted to meet anyway, they were dispersed by riot police and 20-100 were arrested.

U. S. Ambassador requested [redacted] in view of forthcoming election, adding his desire that such agitators be identified as clearly in opposition to government.

24 Jan. Small groups of students provoked series of incidents. Dispersed by police using tear gas and firehoses.

22 Jan. About 100 persons, mostly Cuban exiles, participated in a "march of silence" in downtown Lima. The "march" was organized to protest Cuban executions and to support OAS action against Castro. According to the American Embassy, Lima, the pro-Castro elements on hand outnumbered the marchers, and attempted to disrupt the parade. However, police dispersed the hecklers with tear gas and firehoses.

30 Jan. Action by Communists thwarted by police. Reported terroristic bombing of bus.

24 Jan. Between 22 and 24 Jan., 100,000 leaflets were distributed throughout the country attacking Castro and urging the OAS to take strong action.

Uruguay

(population 2,700,000)

21 Jan. A pro-Castro rally held in Maldonado drew approximately 350 persons, at least half of whom were merely curious passers-by.

23 Jan. Anti-Castro individuals harassed the 23 Jan pro-Castro rally with tear gas and stink bombs.

23 Jan. Communists organized one of the largest rallies held in Montevideo in the past two years. (Police estimated 12,000 persons attended this pro-Castro rally).

25 Jan. Prominent Peruvian ex-Communist addressed full house at National Culture Center calling for mobilization under leadership of democratic reform groups.

25 Jan. The Communist Party of Uruguay (PCU) is awaiting all possible

28 Jan. Demonstrations in San Carlos, Piriapolis, and Maldonado (3,000).

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Uruguay
(continued)

committees have been instructed to go out on the streets as soon as they hear that the MFM has taken measures against Cuba. Reports state the first targets for destruction will be the U.S. Embassy and the plants of El Dia, El Pais and Radio Rural.

Venezuela
(population 6,709,000)

19 Jan. Communist action group raided sporting goods stores to obtain 11 shotguns, 43 boxes of ammunition and 11 containers of gunpowder.

24 Jan. Scattered incidents occurred throughout the day in Caracas and in the interior. Rioting took place in Caracas during the evening and night of 24-25 Jan. In Caracas total dead was estimated at 30 and probably more than 100 wounded.

25 Jan. Riots and terror subsided to a degree. (Reported Communists unhappy with lack of support of military elements.)

26 Jan. Disturbances reported Puerto Cabello.

28 Jan. Some attempted actions taken in Marine Barracks and in 23d Section of Army in Caracas.

29 Jan. Resignation of Rector at Venezuela University as a result of leftist student pressure to close University until several Communists (students and professors) released from jail. They had been arrested in connection with earlier Communist activity in connection with MFM. Unsuccessful rebellion in military in several places. Attempt made at prison in Caracas to organize force to release prisoners.

22 Jan. Cuban exiles in Caracas peacefully demonstrated on 22 Jan. 500 marchers, mostly women, paraded through the streets carrying flags, banners, posters condemning Castro and Communism.

23 Jan. Caravan of 175 automobiles carrying AD, COPEI, and independent students paraded through Caracas blowing horns, waving flags and distributing anti-Castro and anti-Communist leaflets.

25 Jan. A second large caravan of AD, COPEI, and independent students numbering more than 500 cars paraded throughout Caracas

30 Jan. Arrested Major reported existence of Communist guerrilla training camp in Eastern Venezuela. Training camp attacked, 9 captured, including 3 Cuban agents of Venezuelan nationality, but recently returned from Cuba. Large quantity of arms, military uniforms, radio station, extensive supplies of food captured; helicopter landing field discovered.

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